



The St. Croix Current

Photo by Paul Blanchard

Volume 33, Number 1
Winter 2014

Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

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"The mission of Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center is to foster appreciation and inspire stewardship of the natural world. We accomplish our mission by acquiring and preserving land and wildlife habitat, providing quality environmental education, conservation practices and enjoyable outdoor experiences for visitors of all ages and capabilities."

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Field Notes

Thousands of tiny ice crystals were floating through the air this morning, creating a glowing halo of color around the sun. Crystals adhered to the barren tree branches and they sparkled as if they were encrusted with diamonds. Bold Blue Jays and striking Northern Cardinals dotted the trees near the bird feeders like dynamic Christmas ornaments. Nature's year-round beauty and complexity astounds me.

Equally fascinating is the science behind our observations of nature. The glowing halo around the sun is actually the result of light refracting off of thousands of tiny hexagonal ice crystals hanging in our sub-zero winter air. The brilliant azure hues of the Blue Jay is a trick of the light, caused by light reflecting off of the three dimensional structure of the jay's brownish-black feathers. The natural world exhibits an amazing palette of light and color and Carpenter Nature Center makes it easy to enjoy nature throughout the year.



Why is it important to spend time in nature? The mental and physical health benefits of living near a natural area or spending time in nature are wide-ranging. Students perform better in

math, science and reading when nature is included in their curriculum. Adults perform better on cognitive tests after taking a walk in nature. Studies show that spending time in nature results in less mental fatigue, lower stress hormone levels, lower levels of ADHD in children, less obesity, improved eyesight, less depression, more creativity, longer attention spans and the list goes on. Equally important is that people who understand natural science and connect with the natural world are more likely to make choices that help protect the health of our natural environment, which ultimately affects our own health.

This winter why not find an excuse to get outdoors and enjoy some time in nature. Join CNC naturalists Mayme & Alan on an adult moonlight snowshoe hike. Try kick-sledding for the first time with the whole family. Accompany CNC's

Director Emeritus, Jim Fitzpatrick, on a Wisconsin Campus Animal Tracking Hike to find out what species live in the Hein Woods. Once March arrives you can enjoy one of the true rites of life in Minnesota and Wisconsin; spending time in the sugar bush learning about maple syrup making. Best wishes for a wonderful year. I look forward to seeing you on the trails.



During Winter Birds Classes CNC naturalists make it fun for Kindergarten to learn about science and explore the natural world.



A Rocks and Geology class celebrates being the first students to use the overlook on the day it was completed.

WHERE AT CNC?

CNC's Ravine Overlook is located on the Oak Savannah Trail, just north of the visitor center. In 2013 the Hastings Rotary Club volunteered many weekends to re-deck the multi-level structure, and even secured project funding from Xcel Energy and the Ruth Gale and George W. Doffing Charitable Fund. Students and visitors use the structure year-round to access the ravine floor or observe wildlife at tree top level. CNC's naturalists use the overlook to teach students about forest canopies, tree species, seasonal leaf color changes, bird life and natural habitats.

Jan Vieth

Upcoming Programs

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Carpenter Nature Center offers a wide variety of public programs. **Reservations are required.** For more information, to RSVP, or to schedule a group program please call the office: **651-437-4359**

NATURAL CHALLENGES

CNC encourages visitors to increase their fitness level and get outdoors. We will be offering monthly programs on a variety of topics, exploring various habitats at CNC and learning several outdoor skills.

Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hike

Fridays, January 17 & February 14

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Enjoy a winter night under the moonlight with a relaxing snowshoe hike at Carpenter Nature Center. After the hike, warm up by the fire and enjoy some fresh popcorn and hot apple cider. Snowshoes provided or bring your own; dress appropriately for the weather. Program fee: \$10.00 per person or \$7.00 for “Friends of CNC”

Kicksledding and Snowshoeing

Sundays, Jan. 26 & Feb. 23

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

If you have ever wanted to try your hand at kicksledding or snowshoeing this is your chance to give it a try. We'll have kicksleds and snowshoes (for ages 10 and older) available with instructors to give you some tips. Blankets will be available to bundle up the little ones in the kicksleds. Dress appropriately for the weather and don't forget to bring your camera! Program fee: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC” and children under 10



Making Maple Syrup

Sundays, March 16 & 30

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Welcome the coming of spring by joining the CNC staff in the tradition of making maple syrup. We'll hike to the “sugarbush” to tap maple trees, witness the process of turning sap into syrup and sample the finished product. This program will start indoors, but be prepared to hike in the spring snow and mud. Program fee: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC” and children under 10

Geocaching

Sunday, April 27

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Come to CNC for an afternoon of geocaching fun! We will start with a presentation covering the basics of GPS units and explain the world of geocaching. Then you will get a chance to practice your skills while searching for some geocaches on the Nature Center grounds. Bring your GPS if you have one. Program fee: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC” and children under 10

WISCONSIN CAMPUS

Meet at 300 East Cove Road. Program Fees: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC”

Animal Tracking

Saturday, February 15

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Join Jim Fitzpatrick for an interpretive hike on the trails at the Wisconsin Campus. Look for animal tracks and other signs of wildlife species living in the woodlands and prairies. If there is more than 6 inches of snow snowshoes will be provided.

Bird Hike

Saturday, April 26

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Jim Fitzpatrick will lead a birding hike on the Wisconsin campus. We will learn about identifying different bird species, behavior, and habitat. Field guides and binoculars will be available to use or bring your own if you have them.



BIRD BANDING

Fourth Fridays

8:30 a.m. - Noon

January 24 February 28 March 28 April 25 May 23

Have you ever wondered what bird banding is all about? This is your chance to see songbirds up close and to watch the experts band birds at Carpenter Nature Center. Bird banding records can help us learn how long the birds live, where they travel, when and where they migrate and many other interesting facts. Carpenter Nature Center has been banding birds for over 30 years and meets weekly to capture, record, band and release songbirds. The general public is welcome to watch the bird banding the fourth Friday of each month. Donations of bird seed or suet will be greatly appreciated in lieu of a program fee.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME

Fridays

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

January 10 Let it Snow!

April 11 Who's the Cutest Critter?

February 7 Frozen Fun

March 7 Walk in the Woods May 9 Noses to Toes

CNC's Preschool Story Times are designed to introduce young children, ages 2 through 5 (with a parent or guardian), to nature in a fun and safe environment. We'll listen to stories, spend some time outdoors, make an art or craft project and meet live animals. We will be going outside for every program so be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. Program fee: \$5.00 per child or \$3.00 per “Friends of CNC” child; no charge for accompanying adult.

**CNC Story Time programs have been partially funded through support from Target*



IT'S MAPLE SYRUP TIME!

Program fees: \$6.00 per student or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC”

Home School

Wednesday, March 12

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Carpenter Nature Center's Home School Programs are

created to offer students in home schools an opportunity to meet other children, take part in environmental education programs, and enjoy the outdoors. Students will learn how to identify a maple tree, tap a couple trees and see how the sap is turned into maple syrup. Please dress appropriately for the weather and be prepared to hike in the spring snow and mud.

Scout Day

Saturday, March 29

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Join other scouts (boys and girls) as we hike to CNC's “sugarbush” to tap maple trees and collect the sap. See how the sap is turned into maple syrup and sample the finished product. We'll start indoors but be prepared to hike in the spring snow and mud.

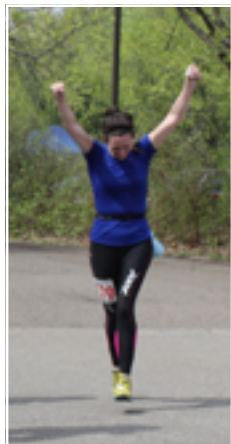
Upcoming Events

More details available at www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org or by calling **651-437-4359**



APPLE BLOSSOM RACES

We are already looking forward to the 29th running of the Apple Blossom Races. The half marathon is one of the most challenging and most beautiful half marathons in Minnesota due to its hilly route past many of the St. Croix Valley apple orchards. The 10K takes runners through the woodlands and savannahs along the nature center's trails. The 5K is a fast straight route down St. Croix Trail. Bring your kids for the free of charge 2K fun run following the other races. All proceeds support Carpenter Nature Center's K-12 environmental education programs and habitat protection. Visit our website to print out a 1/2 marathon or 5K training plan and see the race course map. Check in at CNC by 7:30 AM to catch the bus for the 8:00 AM start. Registration will be online via active.com, midwestevents.com, the CNC website or by calling 651-437-4359 for a registration brochure. Sponsorships make this event possible. If you are interested in donating food, drink, awards or funding please contact Clare@CarpenterNatureCenter.org



We owe a HUGE thank you to Meg and Gary Johnson and Jerry Junker. They saw a hay wagon on our wish list and decided to build one for us. What a great gift! The hay wagon is beautiful and will be used and enjoyed for many years to come.

MASTERS OF THE SKY

Presented by the World Bird Sanctuary

March 1st & 2nd
1 hour programs at
11:00, 1:00, and 3:00

If you have never made it to CNC for the Masters of the Sky programs I urge you to sign up this year. The birds are beautiful and the program is entertaining and educational for children and adults. Learn about the fascinating world of raptors and see live hawks, eagles, owls,



Barn Owl by Mark Boenisch

falcons and vultures up close. Witness the silent flight of a barn owl as its ghostly form glides over the audience. The expert staff and birds of the World Bird Sanctuary travel around the country teaching people about raptors, our environment and what we can all do to protect birds and their habitats worldwide. Program fee is \$10 per person or \$7 for 'Friends of CNC'. **Please call early to RSVP as these programs WILL sell out.**

EARTH DAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

April 19
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



Photo by Paul Blanchard

Celebrate the many birds of Minnesota at the Hastings area Earth Day Birding Festival. This is the second year the Hastings Environmental Protectors has teamed up with CNC for the Birding Festival. It was so much fun last year we had to do it again. Some of the highlights are an "Introduction to Birding" class, a "Raptors 101" class, bird banding demonstrations, and guided bird trips in the Hastings area. RSVPs are required. Box lunches may be ordered. Program fee is \$2.50 per person or \$10 per person including a box lunch. Any proceeds from the event will support K-12 environmental education programming and habitat protection at Carpenter Nature Center. For more details please visit the CNC website.





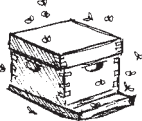























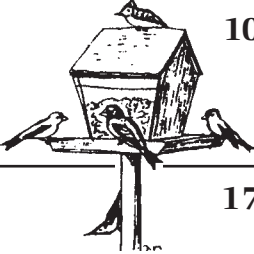




2014 DATES

TO PUT ON THE CALENDAR

St. Croix Valley Scramble July 21
Apple Shack Opens around Labor Day
Autumn in the Valley Gala September 7
Raptor Release September 27
Apple Fest October 11&12
Apple Shack Closes Thanksgiving
For more details please call 651-437-4359

2014 Calendar of Events at Carpenter Nature Center

Phenology from 2013 (with additional entries from 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2008)

		January	1 New Year's Day – CNC Closed	2 8 hours and 53 minutes of daylight	3 	4 Earth at perihelion 5:59 am; Earth-Sun distance 91,406,671 miles
5 	6 Chickadee singing spring song	7	8 	9 Crows razzing Red-tailed Hawk	10 Preschool Story Time: Let it Snow!	11 
12 Honeybees taking cleansing flights (1995)	13 	14 	15 Full Moon 	16 Rabbit remains from predator on trail	17 Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hike 	18 
19	20 Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday Observed	21 -11°F – lowest in 4 years – below 0°F all day	22 	23	24 Public Bird Banding 	25
26 Natural Challenges: Kicksledding and Snowshoeing	27 St Paul Winter Carnival begins	28	29 	30 Crust of Snow (Ojibwe) New Moon	31 Chinese New Year – Year of the Horse	1 February
2 Groundhog Day	3 	4 Several pheasant near wetland	5 5 shrews sighted in Admin basement (1995)	6	7 Preschool Story Time: Frozen Fun	8 
9 Coyote spotted in North Ravine (2003)	10 	11 Accipiter on snow bank by feeders	12 	13 	14 Valentine's Day Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hike	15 Wisconsin Campus: Animal Tracking
16 	17 Presidents' Day	18	19 Motorcyclist on CR 21 (1996)	20 	21 Cardinals singing spring song	22 
23 Natural Challenges: Kicksledding and Snowshoeing Sap Running in Maple Trees (1999)	24 	25 Pansies starting to bloom (1998)	26	27 	28 Public Bird Banding	1 Masters of the Sky Snowshoe Breaking (Ojibwe) New Moon
2 Masters of the Sky	3 Pileated Woodpecker near maintenance entrance	4 March	5 7 plus inches of snow	6	7 Preschool Story Time: Walk in the Woods	8 
9 Daylight Saving Time begins – 2:00 AM	10	11 Swans flying over Hwy 61	12 Home School: Making Maple Syrup	13 	14 Tadpoles overflowing from wetland (2008)	15
16 Natural Challenges: Making Maple Syrup	17 St Patrick's Day	18	19	20 Vernal Equinox – Spring Begins in No. Hemisphere	21 Red Fox caught Gray Squirrel under feeders	22 
23 Daffodils peaking up in circle garden (2001)	24 	25 Turkey Vulture over prairie	26	27	28 Public Bird Banding	29 Scout Day - Making Maple Syrup
30 Natural Challenges: Making Maple Syrup Maple Sugar (Ojibwe) New Moon	31 	1 April	2 Bluebird boxes closed for nesting	3	4 Sandhill Cranes flying high over lodge	5
6 Columbine coming up (1999)	7 	8	9	10 	11 Preschool Story Time: Who's the Cutest Critter?	12
13 Green Darner Dragonfly seen (1998)	14 	15 Full Moon with Total Lunar Eclipse 12:58 am to 4:33 am 	16 Maple sap still running	17 	18	19 Earth Day Birding Festival
20 Easter – CNC Closed	21	22 Earth Day	23 6+ inches of snow – Ice out on wetland	24 	25 Public Bird Banding Arbor Day	26 Wisconsin Campus: Bird Hike
27 Natural Challenges: Geocaching	28	29 Budding Plants (Ojibwe) New Moon	30 14 Hours and 13 Minutes of Daylight			

People Profile

BOARD MEMBER BIO: Sarah Neitz

Hello, my name is Sarah Neitz and I am the AVID Coordinator and Teacher at Oltman Middle School in St. Paul Park. I also am lucky enough to teach an elective Service Learning class, a semester of an environmental education class called Going Blue and a semester of Forensic Science. This will be my 15th year of teaching and I always am just as excited to start each year like it is my first year. Along with teaching at Oltman, I am a varsity assistant soccer coach for Park High School. I am blessed with 2 wonderful children, Abby 12, & Max 10, yellow lab Sampson, and oh yes my husband Dennis.



I have lived in Cottage Grove, Minnesota for the majority of my life. The environment has been a passion of mine since I have been young and I want to not only share that passion with my own children but



Sarah Neitz is pictured with her 7th grade science class after planting the rain garden at CNC. Also pictured is long time volunteer Sherry Akins and horticulturist John McPherson.

to the children I teach as well. I am excited to join the Carpenter Nature Center Board of Directors to enhance connections between schools and the nature center. Also, I want to be a part of preserving our natural land, and learn from others how we can reach out to pass our message along.



STAFF BIO: Clare Neenan

We may have met in the Apple Shack as I worked there the last two apple seasons. I started doing work in the office when Jim retired and officially joined the CNC staff as the Development Coordinator this October. I am very impressed with the work done here to help people gain a real relationship and connection with nature. Not only does this increase our health and well-being,

it increases our chance of taking the necessary steps to protect it. I am excited to be working for a place that is a vital part of protecting the natural world in the St. Croix Valley. Growing up a few miles from CNC I spent countless hours exploring the trails over the years. I earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Minnesota in 2007 and have spent the years since then training jumping horses and giving horse riding lessons. In my free time I like spending time outdoors biking, running, hiking, growing food and swimming. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting many of the dedicated CNC supporters and am looking forward to meeting more of you.

MEET OUR INTERN: Kristen Haynes

We are excited to have Kristen as our Environmental Education intern for the 2013-2014 school year. Kristen comes to Carpenter with a wide variety of experiences. She graduated in May of 2012 with an Environmental Science Degree from Drake University. She is a Minnesota native who has had the opportunity to live in 5 other states and spend a year in New Zealand. Kristen's passion for environmental education has brought her to work at Glacier National Park, Lake Carlos, Glendalough, and Glacial Lakes State Park. She also spent time working for the Science Center of Iowa and Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. Kristen hopes to use her wide range experiences to be a college professor of Environmental Education. She's looking forward to her time here to learn how Environmental Education works at Carpenter. Kristen is also developing an interactive kiosk for the visitor center. She started by creating a fun history of CNC presentation that you can check out in the history section of our website. She finds no two places she's worked at have been the same and always finds it fascinating to see the inner workings of how Environmental Education programs are run.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Tyler Johnson

In this issue we proudly shine the Volunteer Spotlight on Tyler Johnson. Tyler started volunteering in the summer of 2012 with our Summer Camp and Fishing Fun programs. He is a great asset in these programs quickly establishing a rapport

with the kids and lending a helping hand to the staff at any opportunity. He didn't hesitate when we asked him to help with the overnight campout last year even though it was a last minute request. Tyler has also helped with the Apple Blossom Races and the St Croix Scramble. Thank you Tyler for your dedication and support of CNC, for your integrity and your gentle leadership with the summer campers; we are very happy you have chosen to become part of our volunteer corps.

In Memory of

Roger Diedrich from Helen & Hubert Schneider
 Mark W. Berg from Bill & Betty Berg
 John Frascione from Mark Sorenson
 David Dehler from Barbara Gilbertson
 Rita Hopp from June Hopp
 Phil Gruis from Betty & Tom Kieffer and Jen Vieth
 Ken Tilsen from Jim & Judy Freund
 Rose & Paul Allie from Richard Friberg
 Debbie True from Jim & Judy Freund
 John Jensen from Jim & Judy Freund and Bob & Kathy Setzer
 Denise Nelson from Craig & Susie Huxtable

In Honor of

The Staff at CNC from Howard & Janice Lecander
 Jim Fitzpatrick from Joseph Conrad
 Enid Hogg from Ruth & William Estes
 Irene & Gene Lamont from Pam & Loren Albin
 John Lubich from Carol Jager
 Judy Pechacek & Lisa Hedin from Danny & Erin Pace, Monica Devers,
 Shelley Kurzeka-Jung & Thomas Jung, Gary & Mary Cater

Memorials & Honorariums

In Honor of

Shirley Workman from Harvey L. Johnson
 Norman Henry from Alison Young
 Irene & Gene Lamont from Loren Albin & Pam Albin
 Gordon & Jo Bailey from Mark & Michelle Bailey
 Lynn Hayes from Steve Hayes
 Roy Jones from Barclay Jones
 Silverius Becker from Curt & Kathy Mages
 Tim Power from Betsy & Jim Moore
 Lester Schmidt from Dr. Tom Schmidt
 Jackie Weathers from Troy & Cindy Weathers
 Arline & Sheldon Hoffman from Michele Hoffman
 Jeannie Lyner from Nancy & Mike Lyner
 Jay Griggs and Margaret Ontl from Gary & Melissa Porter
 Nicole & Jackson Reents from Amy & John Reents
 Charlie Bogl from Christine Wiegert
 Martin Kellogg from Jeannine Kellogg
 Adam McCord from Mary North
 Mike Hovgaard from Abra Hovgaard.
 Joanie Stanton from Carol Jager
 Michaelene Reedy from Todd & Mary Erickson

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer Information Meetings will be held on January 22 and April 9 at 7pm in the Visitor Center. These informal meetings last about an hour and are a great way to get info on our volunteer opportunities. Please call 651-437-4359 to let us know you are coming; if you can't make a meeting, call to set up a one-on-one with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Winter Volunteer Opportunities

Help would be appreciated with the following: School programs – Winter Birds, Survival, Winter Fest, and Making Maple Syrup. Public programs – Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes, Kick-Sledding Open House, and Making Maple Syrup.

Masters of the Sky March 1 & 2: Volunteers will be needed for cleaning, guest check-in, food and drink sales, traffic control, and more as CNC hosts this popular event that will bring in several hundred visitors over this weekend.

Maple Sap Gathering and Syrup Processing: In addition to the public programs we may need help boiling sap into syrup during March.

Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup: Celebrate Earth Day a day late and help pick up litter along the road near CNC. Wednesday April 23 at 7pm bring your gloves and you can keep any treasures you find as you pick up litter – best finds so far: working flashlight and a \$5 bill.

Apple Blossom Races on May 18: We'll need over 50 volunteers on race day and a few the day before to make sure this event is a success. It will be an early 6am start but it's lots of fun and we'll be done around noon. Mark your calendars for this fabulous opportunity to help.

Sonnet of Winter Bride

By Alan Maloney

*Me thinks not a blanket of snowy cloth
 That covers Winter's chilly bones and skin
 But wedding dress made of the blizzard's wroth
 Garment born thru Nordic maker's bodkin*

*The gown of white that she wears well chosen
 Must be Winter bride so dressed in beauty
 Need look out across her kingdom frozen
 Ice and snow gladly she dons with duty*

*But just beneath her dress of white sublime
 The hidden colors in her smallclothes wait
 The seeds that lie here thru boreal time
 Winter's dormant bounty seek Spring innate*

*Winter bride suffers cold and dark lonely
 Without her Spring is but season only*

FRIENDS OF CARPENTER NATURE CENTER

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State _____ Zip _____

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Email _____

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Check appropriate level:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY | \$50 to \$99 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DONOR | \$100 to \$249 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PATRON | \$250 to \$499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BENEFACTOR | \$500 to \$999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> THE ST. CROIX SOCIETY | \$1,000 to \$2,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> THE EAGLE SOCIETY | \$3,000 to \$4,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> THE DIRECTOR'S COUNCIL | \$5,000 & Beyond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINING FRIEND OF CNC | |

Form of Payment:

(Check one)

- ☐ **Cash** (accepted in person only)
☐ **Check** (payable to Carpenter Nature Center)
☐ **Credit Card** Amount \$ _____
 (Visa or Master Card are accepted)

Copies of this
form are
acceptable

Card # _____
 Exp. Date: _____
 Signature: _____

- ☐ I'm interested in learning more about the
 Tom & Edna Carpenter Society



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Jim Fitzpatrick

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Mayme Johnson	Program Director
Marty Lynch	Maintenance Foreman
Alan Maloney	Interpretive Naturalist
John McPherson	Horticulturist
Linda Polglase	Administrative Assistant
Clare Neenan.....	Development Coordinator

PLEASE INFORM US IF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGES

CNC Wish List

Carpenter Nature Center is in need of the following items in good condition:

Shop Vac for Pavilion	AA batteries
Hot Cocoa Mix	Thumb Drives
Black Oil Sunflower Seed & Thistle	Outdoor Extension Cords

A book list is available if you are interested in purchasing a book for use in programs or for the CNC library. Just give us a call at: 651-437-4359. And remember that donated items are tax deductible.



CNC News & Events

If you are not receiving monthly e-mail updates, please contact:
Clare@CarpenterNatureCenter.org to join our e-mail list.

Follow us online:

www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org, Facebook, Twitter, or www.givemn.org.



giveMN.org
Local. Sustainable. Organized. Free.

[twitter](https://twitter.com/CarpenterCNC)



Trails and interpretive exhibits are open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A trail map (with a self-guided trail) is available at the registration desk where we ask all visitors to check in. Admission is free but we encourage donations which go to help the environmental

education programs at the Nature Center. To join our email list contact: Clare@CarpenterNatureCenter.org.